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Sickness does not depart by speaking of medicine unless the medicine be drunk; liberation comes not through speaking of the Eternal without immediate experience of the Eternal.

—The Crest Jewel of Wisdom

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A NEW PLATEAU

LIGHT on evolution—a clear light on human evolution—is given by William Q. Judge in one of his *Forum* answers (*Theosophical Forum,* December, 1894):

> The Ego—meaning thereby the Self, Ishwara, Krishna, the Supreme—is unborn, changeless, all-knowing. It knows evolving Nature, the instrument, but the latter comes but slowly to a knowledge of the Self. It is therefore latent only in the sense that there are periods when the instrument, the false personality, recognizes it not. Such a period is the present, when although the body has been evolved by Nature—with the aid of the Ego—we do not know the Ego. . . . under the position thus taken, the Ego is still latent and will be until *Manas* is fully developed in a succeeding round. . . . Nature in "evolving a body" which the Ego chooses to use is only showing forth the action of one of the powers of that Ego.

This is an over-view of the entire process of coming to self-consciousness—the awakening to the Self—which is completed during the Manvantara of soul evolution, made up of the successive cycles of progressive development termed rounds and races. Other statements by Mr. Judge give a more precise focus on the meaning of particular cycles. In the *Forum* answer, he says that in the present period the personality does not recognize the Self, and the dominant patterns of thought and motivation which shape current events are sufficient evidence of this. However, as statements in the *Ocean* and elsewhere make plain, this non-recognition of the Self is qualified by manifest evolutionary tendencies

toward recognition. As said in the sixth chapter of the *Ocean*: "But as Mind is being evolved more and more as we proceed in our course along the line of the race development, there can be perceived underneath in all countries the beginning of the transition from the animal possessed of the germ of real mind to the man of mind complete." In short, the structures of self-awareness are beginning to show their presence and make themselves felt. The inauguration of a great cycle of Theosophical influence in the world, starting in 1875, was itself significant confirmation of what Mr. Judge says in the *Ocean*. The minds of human beings called forth this effort of the adepts, H.P.B. suggests in her dedication of *The Secret Doctrine*. Her work contained the body of ideas representing the fruit of a wider, deeper self-consciousness, anticipating the future realization of the race as well as giving instruction to the generations who belong, as Mr. Judge explained, to the "transition period."

What are the characteristics of a "transition period"? They are doubtless many, but one way of speaking of them comprehensively is shown in Mr. Judge's article, "The Synthesis of Occult Science," where he says that any given plane of development is illuminated by the light of the achievement which will be natural on the next higher plane. There is a sense, then, in which the full consciousness of mind of the fifth round is reflected as the light of inspiration to further effort and understanding during the fourth. It would follow that this sort of sequence in inspiration and realization applies to lesser cycles—to family and sub-races, and to periods of even shorter duration such as the hundred-year cycle of the Theosophical Movement.

What can we say about the evolution of "mind" that will aid in recognizing its reality? The general principle is given by H.P.B.: "The Sons of Wisdom, or the *spiritual* Dhyanis, had become 'intellectual' through their contact with matter, because they had already reached, during previous cycles of incarnation, that degree of intellect which enabled them to become independent and self-conscious entities *on this plane* of matter." (*S.D.* II, 167.) They had, in other words, evolved a vehicle of self-consciousness—made a "soul"—out of the stuff of this matter, in which was reflected all that could or need be known of this plane. This *is* the process of evolution—the development of instruments of self-awareness out of the mass of matter available in a given cycle.

From a Theosophical point of view, history is the study of the modes of that process during an interval of time which has some unity of modes.

The language and conceptual approach of *The Secret Doctrine* gives us some idea of the human evolutionary process during the cycle which began in 1875 and will continue for centuries into the future. But since that cycle is marked off in hundred-year intervals, it may be concluded that an increment of progress, in some ways noticeable, occurs within each of these intervals. Can any such progress now be discerned?

How did H.P.B. characterize her own time? In *Isis,* she put the matter briefly, somewhat as Mr. Judge suggested in the *Forum*: "The divine intellect is veiled in man; his animal brain alone *philosophizes.*" (I, 247.)

The plateau of common assumption in the nineteenth century —on which, that is, people acted, whatever their verbal pretensions—produced this effect. There was only lip service to the idea that man has a dual nature. It delivered to the twentieth century the conception of man as no more than a physiological being, delimited in possibilities by the laws of matter and biology. The presence in him of a higher Ego—the idea that man is actually *dual*—was not a part of the Western mind at the outset of the twentieth century. Is there now a change in this outlook? Is there—has there been—another sort of plateau in formation? Can some realization of H.P.B.'s prophecy in "The Tidal Wave" be pointed to as evidence? Is there a symmetrical expression of the growth toward "the man of mind complete"? There have always been intuitive souls voicing such ideas, but is there now a level of cultural expression coming into being which answers to this description?

Well, there are some signs. The agonies of the twentieth century have not been entirely in vain. Its horrors have compelled a number of thoughtful individuals to think deeply about the nature of man and his innate possibilities. If Krishna, the avatar, incarnates when there is an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world, the Krishna in men of the world is sometimes given access to their reflections during such periods. One thinks, for example, of Carl Jung's rejection of the simplifying animalism of Sigmund Freud, and his vague intimation that there is something resembling a higher nature. Jung has had an extraordinarily wide influence—

albeit somewhat sectarian by reason of its limitation, yet on the whole liberating, in a measure inspiring, and good. Out of World War II there came the heroic psychiatrist, Viktor Frankl, with his open revival of the idea of *noetic* thinking. His meaning may seem vague from the viewpoint of "Psychic and Noetic Action," but the conception is seminal. And we are examining the initial swellings of the germ of mind, the emergence in the psyche of the times of the first green shoots of philosophical thinking, not engaging in doctrinal comparisons. There is a sense in which the cyclic evolution of world intelligence may be expected to parallel, not duplicate, the direct impartation of philosophic teaching by the Friends and Teachers of mankind—making its own language out of a deeper interpretation of experience. The unification of terms will come more naturally later, when there is readiness for broad, metaphysical synthesis and deliberate exploration of the tenets of the Wisdom Religion. Mr. Judge suggested something of this sort in his *Epitome,* in connection with the sevenfold nature of man.

There has been the epoch-making contribution of Erich Fromm —his dramatic declaration, "Man is not a Thing," his emphasis on symbolic language, and his strongly moral conceptions. Something similar might be said of Karen Horney's rather remarkable and undoctrinaire writings. In the middle years of this century, the work of A. H. Maslow spoke to the deep hungers of countless people throughout the United States, with a considerable influence abroad as well. Implicit in his theoretical construct of a reformed psychology is a higher nature in man—witness of the peak experience, inaugurator of self-actualization. For the first time in the twentieth century, his work provided a vigorous alternative to the pathology-founded conceptions of Freud, the mechanistic formulas of Behaviorism. Throughout the world of learning as well as in a large audience of intelligent and searching readers, the influence of Maslow has been making itself felt for a generation. His ideas are already widely assimilated, and have led to much greater open-mindedness among students of psychology, workers in sociology, and thoughtful readers in general.

Meanwhile, the work of the iconoclasts and critics of science has been vastly effective. Writers of the caliber of Mumford and Roszak have also been opening minds, removing the barriers to original thinking, stirring visionary use of the imagination. These

fresh trends have hardly begun, and might now be said to have reached the disordered stage of extravagance and undisciplined speculation. Yet, at the same time, there are thinkers of natural taste and rigor who are making themselves heard. Richard Goodwin's *The American Condition* may be taken as an example.

It is natural to speak deploringly of the follies of computer enthusiasts—of those who actually propose that these ingenious machines will some day replace the best judgment of human beings. Yet even this ridiculous claim has had its value in precipitating ever more effective analysis of the scientific method, of the fallacy behind the claim of "objectivity," and in bringing forward clarifying statements of all that a universe made of scientific abstractions leaves out.

One consequence of such criticisms is the throwing of the modern mind back on itself. If all that we call science is predicated, not on well-ascertained and unchangeable fact, but on data weighted with subjective bias, chosen by preconception—if, as H.P.B. said long ago, science is indeed honeycombed with metaphysical assumption—then on what, indeed, shall we found our certainties?

All this has pointed to the necessity for more searching conceptions of self, more realizing ideas of the nature of man in his non-physical aspects. A significant comment came from the eminent mathematician and scientific thinker, Jacob Bronowski, a few years before his death. What happens when, according to Gödel's theorem, a scientific system breaks down? Then, Bronowski said, we alter the assumptions or axioms of the system by making an act of *self-reference*.

In the area of general cultural study and criticism, the scholarly writer, Erich Kahler, has exercised a strongly constructive influence. The distinction between higher and lower manas becomes virtually explicit in *The Meaning of History*. He speaks of the *"split between reason and rationality,"* showing that the preoccupation with mechanistic logic, the rationalizing procedures of technology, and the cash-in, production-seeking tendency of the lower aspect of the mind develop into a monopoly of thought at the expense of true reason.

Meanwhile there has lately been a distinctive Platonic revival, of which the best example may be Robert Cushman's *Therapeia*

(Chapel Hill, 1958), which is a concise study of Plato's entire philosophy, always examined from Plato's point of view, never that of some other commentator. This work happily complements the recent criticism of science, and of the assumptions of Francis Bacon which have been science's beacon light, showing the roots of empiricism and the neglect of the inner side of life in Aristotle, in contrast with the philosophic strength of Plato's reliance on the inner man. These themes are slowly re-entering the current of modern thought by various channels, sometimes obtaining independent expression, as in the most recent publication of Jacob Needleman, author of *The New Religions,* whose just published *A Sense of the Cosmos* suggests that a plateau of philosophic assumption is now replacing the old, nineteenth-century outlook, and that, in years to come, it will be increasingly natural for writers of a new generation to speak without inhibition or embarrassment from this new elevation.

Another writer of evident Platonic inspiration is Hannah Arendt. Her works on history and social process are well known, not only through her penetrating examination of the modern idea of evil, and her study of the American Revolution, but from her exemplary use, in these confusing days, of the clarity of Socratic insight and method. In a recent paper, "Thinking and Moral Considerations" (*Social Research,* Autumn, 1971), she makes a clear distinction between thinking toward particular ends, for the purpose of achieving concrete objectives—the obvious function of the lower mind—and thinking philosophically and metaphysically, in pursuit of an understanding of *thinking,* and of the thinking *self*. The latter process she calls "resultless," and indeed it seems in some sense a parallel of Patanjali's category of meditation without a seed. Her paper is a rare defense of philosophic thinking in the Platonic mode:

> The gift for dealing with things that do not appear has often been believed to exact a price—the price of blinding the thinker or poet to the visible world. Think of Homer, whom the gods gave the divine gift by striking him with blindness; think of Plato's *Phaedo* where those who do philosophy appear to those who don't, the many, like people who pursue death. . . .

Hence the question is unavoidable: How can anything relevant for the world we live in come out of so resultless an enterprise?

It is the means, she shows, by which we free ourselves from

preconception and prejudice—emancipate the mind from intellectual and emotional habit. We do not learn any single thing—indeed Socrates claimed to be, like a midwife, sterile—yet by this thinking we reach a stance of awareness where the soul's decisions have free play. Her conclusion about such meditative thinking will bear attention:

> Thinking in its non-cognitive, non-specialized sense as a natural need of human life, the actualization of the difference given in consciousness, is not a prerogative of the few but an everpresent faculty of everybody; by the same token, inability to think is not the "prerogative" of those many who lack brain power but the everpresent possibility for everybody—scientists, scholars, and other specialists in mental enterprises not excluded—to shun that intercourse with oneself whose possibility and importance Socrates first discovered. . . .
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> . . . thinking as such does society little good, much less than the thirst for knowledge in which it is used as an instrument for other purposes. It does not create values, it will not find out, once and for all, what "the good" is, and it does not confirm but rather dissolves accepted rules of conduct. Its political and moral significance comes out only in those rare moments when
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> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold
> . . .
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> When—
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> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.
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> At these moments, thinking ceases to be a marginal affair. . . . When everybody is swept away unthinkingly by what everybody else does and believes in, those who think are drawn out of hiding because their refusal to join is conspicuous and thereby becomes a kind of action. The purging element in thinking, Socrates' midwifery, . . . brings out the implications of unexamined opinions and thereby destroys them—values, doctrines, theories, and even convictions. . . .
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> If thinking, the two-in-one of the soundless dialogue, actualizes the difference within our identity as given in consciousness and thereby results in conscience as its by-product, then judging, the by-product of the liberating effect of thinking, realizes thinking, makes it manifest in the world of appearances, where I am never alone and always much too busy to be able to think. The manifestation of the wind of thought is not knowledge; it is the ability to tell right from wrong, beautiful from ugly. And this indeed may prevent catastrophes. . . .

Hannah Arendt's language is her own, but her thought seems to breathe a timeless air, telling in practical or working terms of

how the awareness of the higher ego may enter into the decision-making of the world, once access is provided to the egoic intelligence which can be reached by the aspiring human, but which cannot descend save by the ardent striving of those on earth.

These themes are no longer alien to the world of thought, finding expression, as they do, in current publications with increasing frequency.

Some lines from Jacob Needleman's Introduction to *A Sense of the Cosmos* amount to an interesting comment on Hannah Arendt's idea that the soul's insight comes into play when human affairs go awry—when the "center will not hold." He is speaking of the mysterious sources of religious and philosophic inspiration:

> Where did these ideas come from? And were they intentionally fed into the vortex of European life in the same way and from the same kind of source that had originally transmitted the teachings of Jesus into the life of the Western World? . . .
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> I hope the above does not give the wrong impression. I do not claim to know where new, awakening ideas come from or how they need to be transmitted so as to serve as a positive influence on the life of a civilization. . . . We are accustomed to believe that great truths need only to be put before us and they will have a beneficent effect. But I wonder if there is not something exceedingly naive in this assumption. . . .
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> In any event, the great traditions make no such easy assumption about man's ability to digest the truth. From one point of view, in fact, sacred tradition can even be defined as the science of transmitting truth by degrees so that it can enter correctly and harmoniously into the human psyche. To this end, a tradition both withholds and reveals at the same time. Transmission of truth is always understood in this way.

Writing of this sort—manifestly of great earnestness—if it accomplishes nothing else, will certainly help to create a matrix of understanding and invitation to true ideas. This, in itself, is a 180-degree change from the common mood which prevailed in 1875. While the several writers we have referred to or quoted are indeed but a few, they are not unrepresentative of the new spirit, being, indeed, among its leading examples. And as the *Gita* says, "whatever is practiced by the most excellent men, that is also practiced by others. The world follows whatever example they set."

STUDIES IN ISIS UNVEILED

SPIRITUALISM

THOSE best prepared to appreciate occultism are the spiritualists, although, through prejudice, until now they have been the bitterest opponents to its introduction to public notice. Despite all foolish negations and denunciations, their phenomena are real. Despite, also, their own assertions they are wholly misunderstood by themselves. The totally insufficient theory of the constant agency of disembodied human spirits in their production has been the bane of the *Cause*. A thousand mortifying rebuffs have failed to open their reason or intuition to the truth. Ignoring the teachings of the past, they have discovered no substitute. We offer them philosophical deduction instead of unverifiable hypothesis, scientific analysis and demonstration instead of undiscriminating faith. Occult philosophy gives them the means of meeting the reasonable requirements of science, and frees them from the humiliating necessity to accept the oracular teachings of "intelligences," which as a rule have less intelligence than a child at school. So based and so strengthened, modern phenomena would be in a position to command the attention and enforce the respect of those who carry with them public opinion. Without invoking such help, spiritualism must continue to vegetate, equally repulsed—not without cause—both by scientists and theologians. In its modern aspect, it is neither a science, a religion, nor a philosophy.

Are we unjust; does any intelligent spiritualist complain that we have misstated the case? To what can he point us but to a confusion of theories, a tangle of hypotheses mutually contradictory? Can he affirm that spiritualism, even with its thirty years of phenomena, has any defensible philosophy; nay, that there is anything like an established method that is generally accepted and followed by its recognized representatives?

And yet, there are many thoughtful, scholarly, earnest writers among the spiritualists, scattered the world over. There are men

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NOTE.—This article is made up of passages from *Isis Unveiled*, topically arranged. The pages from which the statements are taken are given at the conclusion of the article. This article is part of a series that was first printed in volumes 5 and 6 of THEOSOPHY.

who, in addition to a scientific mental training and a reasoned faith in the phenomena *per se,* possess all the requisites of leaders of the movement. How is it then, that, except throwing off an isolated volume or so, or occasional contributions to journalism, they all refrain from taking any active part in the formation of a system of philosophy? This is from no lack of moral courage, as their writings well show. Nor because of indifference, for enthusiasm abounds, and they are sure of their facts. Nor is it from lack of capacity, because many are men of mark, the peers of our best minds. It is simply for the reason that, almost without exception, they are bewildered by the contradictions they encounter, and wait for their tentative hypotheses to be verified by further experience. Doubtless this is the part of wisdom. It is that adopted by Newton, who, with the heroism of an honest, unselfish heart, withheld for seventeen years the promulgation of his theory of gravitation, only because he had not verified it to his own satisfaction.

Spiritualism, whose aspect is rather that of aggression than of defense, has tended toward iconoclasm, and so far has done well. But, in pulling down, it does not rebuild. Every really substantial truth it erects is soon buried under an avalanche of chimeras, until all are in one confused ruin. At every step of advance, at the acquisition of every new vantage-ground of FACT, some cataclysm, either in the shape of fraud and exposure, or of premeditated treachery, occurs, and throws the spiritualists back powerless because they *cannot* and their invisible friends *will* not (or perchance, can, less than themselves) make good their claims. Their fatal weakness is that they have but *one* theory to offer in explanation of their challenged facts—the agency of *human disembodied spirits,* and the medium's complete subjection to them. They will attack those who differ in views with them with a vehemence only warranted by a better cause; they will regard every argument contradicting their theory as an imputation upon their common sense and powers of observation; and they will positively refuse even to argue the question.

How, then, can spiritualism be ever elevated to the distinction of a science? This, as Professor Tyndall shows, includes three absolutely necessary elements: observation of facts; induction of laws from these facts; and verification of those laws by constant practical experience. What experienced observer will maintain

that spiritualism presents either one of these three elements? The medium is not uniformly surrounded by such test conditions that we may be sure of the facts; the inductions from the supposed facts are unwarranted in the absence of such verification; and, as a corollary, there has been no sufficient verification of those hypotheses by experience. In short, the prime element of accuracy has, as a rule, been lacking.

That we may not be charged with desire to misrepresent the position of spiritualism, at the date of this present writing, or accused of withholding credit for advances actually made, we will cite a few passages from the London *Spiritualist* of March 2, 1877. At the fortnightly meeting, held February 19, a debate occurred upon the subject of "Ancient Thought and Modern Spiritualism." Some of the most intelligent Spiritualists of England participated. Among these was Mr. W. Stainton Moses, M.A.,* who has recently given some attention to the relation between ancient and modern phenomena. He said: "Popular spiritualism is not scientific; it does very little in the way of scientific verification. Moreover, exoteric spiritualism is, to a large extent, devoted to presumed communion with personal friends, or to the gratification of curiosity, or the mere evolution of marvels. . . . The truly esoteric science of spiritualism is very rare, and not more rare than valuable. To it we must look for the origination of knowledge which may be developed exoterically. We proceed too much on the lines of the physicists; our tests are crude, and often illusory; we know too little of the Protean power of spirit. Here the ancients were far ahead of us, and can teach us much. We have not introduced any certainty into the conditions—a necessary prerequisite for true scientific experiment. This is largely owing to the fact that our circles are constructed on no principle. . . . We have not even mastered the elementary truths which the ancients knew and acted on, *e.g.*, the isolation of mediums. We have been so occupied with wonder-hunting that we have hardly tabulated the phenomena, or propounded one theory to account for the production of the simplest of them. . . . We have never faced the question: What is the intelligence? This is the great blot, the most frequent source of error, and here we might learn with advantage from the ancients. There is the strongest disinclination among spiritualists to admit the possibility of the truth of occultism. In this respect they are as

*Mr. Moses was a leading writer upon Spiritualism a generation ago. His writings were usually signed with his *nom de plume*, "M. A. Oxon."—Eds.

hard to convince as is the outer world of spiritualism. Spiritualists start with a fallacy, viz.: that all phenomena are caused by the action of departed human spirits; *they have not looked into the powers of the human spirit;* they do not know the extent to which spirit acts, how far it reaches, what it underlies."

Our position could not be better defined.

Self-complacency is the most serious obstacle to the enlightenment of the modern spiritualist. His thirty years' experience with the phenomena seem to him sufficient to have established intermundane intercourse upon an unassailable basis. His thirty years have not only brought to him the conviction that the dead communicate and thus prove the spirit's immortality, but also settled in his mind an idea that little or nothing can be learned of the other world, except through mediums.

For the spiritualists, the records of the past either do not exist, or if they are familiar with its gathered treasures, they regard them as having no bearing upon their own experiences. And yet, the problems which so vex them, were solved thousands of years ago by the theurgists, who have left the keys to those who will search for them in the proper spirit and with knowledge. Is it possible that nature has changed her work, and that we are encountering different spirits and different laws from those of old? Or can any spiritualist imagine that he knows more, or even as much about mediumistic phenomena or the nature of various spirits, as a priest-caste who spent their lives in theurgical practice, which had been known and studied for countless centuries? If the spiritualists have their phenomena under test-conditions, so had the old theurgists, whose records, moreover, show that they could produce and vary them at will. The day when this fact shall be recognized, and profitless speculations of modern investigators shall give place to patient study of the works of the theurgists, will mark the dawn of new and important discoveries in the field of psychology.

When the possible nature of the manifesting intelligences, which science believes to be "psychic force," and spiritualists the identical spirits of the dead, is better known, then will academicians and believers turn to the old philosophers for information.

We are forced to contradict, point-blank, the assertion that "the marvellous wonders of the present day, which belong to so-called modern spiritualism, are identical in character with the experiences

of the patriarchs and prophets of old." They are identical only so far that the same forces and occult powers of nature produce them. But though these powers and forces may be, and most assuredly are, all directed by unseen intelligences, the latter differ more in essence, character and purposes than mankind itself, composed, as it now stands, of white, black, brown, red, and yellow men, and numbering saints and criminals, geniuses and idiots. The writer may avail himself of the services of a tame orang-outang or a South Sea islander; but the fact alone that he has a servant makes neither the latter nor himself identical with Aristotle and Alexander.

Now, except the story of Saul and Samuel, there is not a case instanced in the *Bible* of the "*evocation* of the dead." As to being lawful, the assertion is contradicted by every prophet. Nowhere throughout the *Old Testament,* nor in Homer, nor Virgil is communion with the dead termed otherwise than necromancy. One of the greatest reasons for it was the doctrine of the ancients, that no soul from the "abode of the blessed" will return to earth, unless, indeed, upon rare occasions its apparition might be required to accomplish some great object in view, and so bring benefit upon humanity. In this latter instance the "soul" had no need to be *evoked.* It sent its portentous message either by an evanescent *simulacrum* of itself, or through *messengers,* who could appear in *material* form, and personate faithfully the departed. The souls that could so easily be invoked were deemed neither safe nor useful to commune with. They were the souls, or *larvæ* rather, from the infernal region of the limbo—the *sheol,* the region known by the kabalists as the eighth sphere.

The only standard within the reach of spiritualists and present-day mediums by which they can *try* the spirits, is to judge, 1, by their actions and speech; 2, by their readiness to manifest themselves; and 3, whether the object in view is worthy of the apparition of a "*disembodied* spirit," or can excuse any one for disturbing *the dead.* Saul was on the eve of destruction, himself and his sons, yet Samuel inquired of him: "Why hast thou *disquieted* me, to bring me up?" But the "intelligences" that visit the circle-rooms, come at the beck of every trifler who would while away a tedious hour.

NOTE.—The volume and page references to *Isis Unveiled*, from which the foregoing article is compiled, are, in order of the excerpts, as follows: volume ii, 636, 637, 638; volume i, 334, 335, 492, 493.

ACQUIRED HABITS

IN attempting to deal with problems which only find their solution worked out to the full on planes and in terms incomprehensible to our ordinary senses, it would seem possible that illustrations drawn from the science of physiology should serve to explain these problems somewhat more fully than those illustrations which are drawn from physical science alone. Physiology is at least the science of life, and though, when pressed, we must admit that we know very little indeed of the main factors which lie behind the phenomena of life; and that, with all the means of research which we possess, we know nothing of even the physical forces *in themselves*, but only study their manifestations and correlations, yet we may, at all events, argue from the little we do know, and attempt to correct our conclusions by comparison with the analogies which we can draw from every science. The principle involved in the "as above, so below," is shown to be true in all departments of science, and has formed a most valuable means of verifying the results obtained by pushing a theory to its legitimate conclusion. Thus by correcting the phenomena of vital force by those of physical, we may arrive at many more or less just conclusions. Therefore, it is probable that by proceeding a step further, and drawing analogies from physiology, we may form an idea of what, for want of a better term, may be called the life of morality, and the forces whereby it is governed. By the term moral, I do not mean to convey any idea of that which underlies what is ordinarily known as morality, but a very much wider idea than that, namely, the force which really lies at the base of and inspires all our *motives* of action. Of course these are indirectly also at the root of our physical and what may be called our animate life, in which we men are in contact with the life of animals; but at present we need not endeavor to make a distinction between man and the animals, which are endowed with the physical and animate life force, but in whom the moral life is entirely latent, save in the case of a very few of the higher species, such as dogs

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NOTE.—This article was first published by Madame Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for May, 1888 and was reprinted in THEOSOPHY 2:112.

and elephants. Though, even in these cases, it may be argued with good show of reason that this "moral life" of the higher animals is the result of education.

Now in man and animal alike there are great nervous centers which govern the vital phenomena, and hence, as a consequence, the physical phenomena of life. These centres, as they are called, are formed by collections of nerve cells, which occupy a very fairly defined area. They are found in the brain and the spinal cord for the most part, and to a lesser degree in the great vital organs themselves. Further, there is what is known as the sympathetic system of nerves, with its closely meshed network of nerves and ganglia, which lies outside, but in front of, the vertebral column, the whole length of the body; this system is closely connected in its whole extent with the brain and spinal cord, and the branches therefrom, which are known as the cerebro-spinal system of nerves. Again to some extent the control of the nerves lies with the Will of any man, and the actions which result are termed "voluntary," but a very large majority of the processes and functions of the animal body are what are called "Reflex." These "Reflex" processes for the most part take place thus: An impression is made on what are called the nerves of sensation; these conduct a stimulus to one of the nerve centres above mentioned, and from this centre the stimulus is reflected along a motor nerve; and the action or function ensues. Thus the sensation is "reflected" into motion independently of the consciousness of the individual. Perhaps the best example of a limited reflection is in the case of the eye, when, in response to the stimulus of light, the iris alone, of all the muscles in the body, moves. Now all reflex actions are essentially involuntary, although they in great part admit of being controlled, modified, and prevented by the will. They, most of them, are directed for the preservation of the well-being of the body, and markedly show how the nerve centres combine and arrange in order the action of the muscles, so that they may unite for this common end. Among "Reflex" actions there is a large class called "Secondary," which require for their first performance, and for many subsequent performances, an effort of the will more or less intense, but which, by constant repetition, are habitually and almost mechanically performed, and in many cases almost without the intervention of consciousness and volition; such are reading, writing, and walking. This capacity of the nervous sys-

tem, which consists in "organizing conscious actions into more or less unconscious ones," is that which makes education and training possible. It is by "association" of the reflex actions frequently repeated in a definite order that these actions come to take on a species of "automatism." To such an extent is this carried that we are all familiar with instances of persons, when in the somnambulic condition, writing and playing the piano in a state of complete unconsciousness to physical surroundings.

In fact "automatism" is a very important point in the argument. It is employed by physiologists to indicate the origination in nervous centres of impulses and their conduction from those centres independently of the reception of a stimulus from another part. And in this sense it is not possible in the present state of physiological knowledge to say what actions are "automatic." But the nearest examples are certainly the functions of respiration and the rhythmic action of the heart, which will be considered later on. Suffice it at present that it is a very important point that actions, which are distinctly reflex at the beginning, may be organized into unconscious actions which have a very strong character about them of automatism, and that the two above-mentioned functions are those which are at the foundations of all vital phenomena, and hence, by the passage of time and by education, would necessarily most nearly approach to being automatic.

We may now consider the sympathetic system of nerves. This system of nerves at first sight appears to be automatically too complex to be understood. In reality, however, it is much more simple in arrangement than the cerebro-spinal, and its complexity is due to the manner in which each part is linked to the neighbouring and distant part and to the cerebro-spinal system as well. When dissected out it is found that the essential parts of this system consist of a ganglion, or nerve centre, and two nerves—afferent and efferent—leading to this centre, and from it to one of the organs. Thus the sympathetic system is made up of an enormous number of small systems, and the whole are united into the greatest complexity. But there is one essential difference between the two systems. In the case of the cerebro-spinal system, the majority of the actions taking place under its guidance are voluntary actions; in the case of the sympathetic system not only do the majority of actions take place without a voluntary effort, but they are never controlled by the mind save under the strong excitement or de-

pressing influence of some passion; or secondarily, through some "voluntary movement" with which the involuntary region of the body is "associated." But in this latter case the action is really involuntary. Thus, in exceptional instances only does the mind control the action of the sympathetic nerves, and then only under undue excitement or depression; while for the most part the various centres of the sympathetic system, and also of the spinal cord, are reflex centres, which, subject to the "inhibiting action" of the brain, or more highly-organized centre, possess an independent action of their own that, aided by custom, habit, and frequency of use, almost amounts to automatism.

In the consideration of automatism we find that there is a nervous region of very great importance situated at the top of the spinal cord and immediately below the brain, and which, roughly speaking, is just within the skull about an inch behind a line drawn horizontally through the lobe of the ear. This region is so important that it has been experimentally found that the entire brain and spinal cord with this sole exception may be removed and still the heart will continue to beat and the animal will go on breathing. But when this region is injured, death ensues at once. Now the most important of the functions of the Medulla Oblongata, as the region in question is called, is that of respiration, and this one function may serve as the type of automatic actions, although there is some dispute about it. Like all the functions which are necessary to life it is essentially involuntary, but its action is also, to some extent, under the control of the will, for otherwise man would be unable to speak or to sing. It is argued that the act is a reflex one owing to the stimulation of nervous fibres which are distributed to the lungs; on the other hand it is stated that respiration takes place by direct stimulation of the Medulla Oblongata by the increasingly venous condition of the blood. Probably both functions exist, but the nerves leading from the lungs to the "respiratory centre" may be cut or may be paralysed by chloroform, and still the complicated muscular movements which constitute respiration take place in an orderly manner. As said above, respiration can to some extent be controlled by the will, and the breath can be "held" for a varying length of time which increases with practice. But the need of breath eventually overcomes the strongest opposition, and even the most determined attempts to commit suicide in this manner have failed.

Still there is no doubt that by practice persons have increased the time during which they can hold their breath, as in certain well-authenticated cases of suspended animation, which have occurred in various parts of the world and especially in India, and thus there is shown to be a power which may be exercised in control of the natural automatism of the body and which, so far as the bodily frame is concerned, is independent of it. Were this not the case the instances of sudden death which occur through shock, and without injury to any part of the body, would be impossible, for there is no reason why the functions of respiration and of the heart should be interfered with, and the body would go on breathing and the heart beating under the stimulus of the Medulla Oblongata.

Thus, then, it is this "organizing conscious actions into more or less unconscious ones," but which may still be under control of some force that we may call the will, which is of the highest importance to the occultist, as will be seen later on. Speaking in terms of planes it enables a man to do two or perhaps more things at the same time. Starting an original impulse to walk from point to point, a man may take the necessary steps with no other guidance than the reflected sensations of one step to make another, and during the time occupied his mind may be engaged on matters of a totally different character. But waiving these considerations and the assumption that the brain is physically a registering "organ of mind" it is evident that to a considerable extent the brain has the control of the body.

To those who have studied metaphysics the term "personality" is a very familiar one. In reference to the present subject it would seem to stand to the "higher self" in very much the same relation as the body does to the brain—or rather to the brain only as the organ of mind; that is to say that the personality is, on the moral plane referred to previously, the outer covering, more or less gross, of the real man within—the higher self. This latter is the gradually increasing product of ages and is added to by the "personality" only when it carries out the spiritual aspirations which arise beyond, but which are communicated to the personality by the higher self. Consequently we may compare the actions dictated by the personality to those physical ones which are governed by the lower reflex centres and which have no concern whatever with the brain.

And this brings into prominence a curious fact in physiology

and pathology that if either a nerve centre or nerve leading from that centre be stimulated without the impulse passing *to and through* that centre, the actions which result are tumultuous and disordered. This fact has a very important bearing by analogy on those actions which are dictated, reflexly or not, by the "personality" only, for, as regards the higher self or brain, they are found tumultuous and disorderly and are, as a rule, not "directed with a view to the welfare of the organism," and more especially of other organisms. It would be impossible to enter on an elaborate analysis of what the personality really is—and as tedious as if one were in these pages to enter on a detailed description of the minute anatomy of the brain and spinal cord. Man is a compound, in his personality, of "desires, passions, interests, modes of thinking and feeling, opinions, prejudices, judgments of others, likings and dislikings, affections, and ambitions, public and private." For the most part this personality constitutes the horizon of man, and identifies him with this narrowed circle of interests. In other words he becomes exceedingly "Selfish." Of course the circle is very frequently enlarged, as in the case of family, of a society, of a church, or a state, and other individuals esteem men in proportion as their circle enlarges. Now the enlargement of the circle to and beyond these limits is a process of extreme difficulty, and especially when the circle is enlarged beyond these limits. But there is also another element which has to be eliminated—the thought of Self must not enter into the consideration at all. That is to say that the personality as a source of motive must be entirely eliminated and destroyed; and this is the process which occupies ages and is accompanied by such pain and suffering that it can only be faced by the aid of a consciousness of the higher self, and that this work is the only work worth doing. It is not very difficult to understand why this should be so difficult, and why it should take ages to accomplish, for we have to remember that it is the accentuation of personality against personality—the competition to live—which is at the base of all our modern education. In every age the strong man has kept his citadel against all comers until a stronger than he came, and the question is whether he can find a deeper and greater source of strength. To some extent that has been found, for "union is strength"; and the only problem has been amidst the clashing of personalities to make union possible. The parallel in physiology is seen in the difficulty,

only obviated by long practice, experienced by divers in holding their breath. Murder will out, respiration will recommence and the educated personality reasserts itself, as the body insists upon the breath it is accustomed to have. But again it is possible for man to lay aside the limitations of his personality and merge his living interests with those of the world in which other personalities have an equal right and share. He can force himself to no longer feel separate from them, and to live in companionship with that which in them is beyond their personalities—their individualities, their Higher Selves. But this is a process which needs an enormous strength of will and an application to which most men are unequal. The ordinary senses have to be stilled and quieted before—if one may misapply a term—the sense of the higher self is felt and realised. Thus then the analogy of physiology is maintained; the bodily functions are reflexly fulfilled, and by long education, in some cases, automatically, but are subject, in proportion as another education has trained the mind and will, to the brain. Equally so on the moral plane, the desires and tendencies of the personality act more or less reflexly and automatically without other control. But in proportion as the limitations of Self have been transcended so also is the extent of the power increased which controls the personality. The brain in one case, the higher self in the other, being trained and educated to send down impulses sufficient to control the physiological needs of the animal mechanism, or the desires of the personality.

But a further and yet more interesting problem now presents itself for discussion. We have seen that it is rational to conclude that conscious acts are by education organized into unconscious, and that the two functions most important to the physiological health of the body, viz.: respiration and the action of the heart, have been rendered automatic and independent almost of any voluntary conscious effort, although this control may be, in some instances, recovered. Consequently, by analogy, the control on the moral plane may be vested in the higher self as against the personality, by an effort to unite the consciousness with that higher self. That is, the higher self, or brain, will be able to control the physiological personality, or a higher centre dominate a lower. But a still further point would seem to consist in this. Why should it not be possible to make of the higher self a reflex centre, and finally an automatic one, which shall control the personality ab-

solutely? On the physiological analogy it would certainly seem reasonable that this should be so. Let the personality send up a suggestion for action to the reflex centre, which may be in or below the level of the higher self, as is the case in the relative positions of the cerebral hemispheres and the Medulla Oblongata. Supposing that the motor point be in the higher self, it would only seem natural that the corresponding motion excited by the suggestion of the personality will either be in accord with the higher self, and be accomplished, or will be nullified. If, however, the motor point be below the higher self, then the communication must be handed on in order that the higher self shall have the control, and the personality not allowed to exercise sway.

Finally, however, the real importance of the argument does not rest with the higher self, but with the spiritual life beyond; or, as "Light on the Path" states it, "the life beyond individuality."

Let us grant for the moment that it is possible for the consciousness to be identified with the higher self, and that the personality as militating against that better part of man, and consequently interfering with "the life beyond individuality," is entirely subjected and controlled by a centre of force, certainly reflex, and, if possible, automatic, which is vested in the higher self. What, then, is the consequence? The personality as a source of separateness is done away with, and only used as an instrument in the same way that the physical body uses a finger. The real life is centered in the higher self, which maintains an automatic action over the personality, and prevents it from becoming a source of mischief. The force which is vested in the higher self or individuality, is derived from that united Spirit of Life which is beyond individuality, and the man is left free to concentrate his attention and aspirations on that Spirit of Life, and draw more and more of its influence through his higher self into the world around him. Just as the physiological needs of the body are controlled by an unconscious, involuntary mechanism, so the personality becomes a conquered instrument, used for ends greater than it knows of. Man, as man, is no longer swayed by his changing and temporary desires, and has reached the happy "Waters of Oblivion."

—A.I.R.

NOTE.—While, in the concluding paragraph of this article, the "higher self" is identified as the "individuality," making clear the intent of the writer, it is of some importance to compare this usage with H P B's discussion of the meaning of "Higher Self" on pages 174-75 of *The Key to Theosophy*.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.

letters • questions • comment

Theosophy presents a dualistic view of man—that man has a lower and a higher nature, a personal and an impersonal self, and further, that the one is to be subjected to the other. What are these two "selves" and why does one have to be subjected to the other?

The "dualism" of Theosophy differs in a fundamental respect from the meaning of this term in Western philosophy, and that difference is crucial: the two poles of spirit and matter are not absolutes but primary aspects of the One Life in manifestation. This means that man is not a creature who vacillates between two conflicting extremes, the product of two cosmic forces, Good and Evil, for the essence of his being is rooted in that which is beyond all opposites, the origin of both spirit and matter. His higher nature *is* the permanent, immortal man, the one "for whom the hour will never strike," in the words of *The Voice of the Silence*. His lower nature is generated by a ray of mind fused with the principle of desire when incarnated. The personal self, or feeling of "I," is temporary because it results from the identification of the consciousness of man with that complex of impulses, ideas, feelings and habits which is produced by the contact of mind with matter. The "I" of the incarnating Ego, referred to as "real" because it endures, looks through this cloud of conceptions and exerts its influence with every effort of the man toward realization of his identity with other beings. In the movement toward growth may be recognized the influence of this higher nature, while the impulses of the lower are in pursuit of short-range goals. It is of primary importance, then, for the incarnated Ego to learn the difference between these two, so that the lower is not mistaken for the higher, the temporary seen as the permanent. This is the beginning of a deliberate effort to identify oneself as the immortal Ego, using the power of self-consciousness focused in the human frame.

The phrasing of the question seems to indicate the idea of subjection or imposition on the part of the higher man in relation to the lower. This regards the situation only from the viewpoint

of appearances. The higher ego is in actuality the "parent" of the lower, and the lower is a reflection of the higher in the raw material of human evolution. The personal man represents the "work" of the cycle of evolution—the matter to be refined, elevated, raised up, and made fit to embody the light of full self-consciousness. The personality is a synthesis of what is to be transformed—the psychic elements of the lower principles.

If a man were to take the position that within him is the higher self, that One Life which is the source of a compassionate and egoic outlook on any and all circumstances, capable of becoming a living reality in his life, he would increasingly strive to bring the resources of the personal self into harmonious adjustment with the motivation of the higher. The natural field for this development is the human mind because there all experience is interpreted and understood, whether physical, psychic, mental, or spiritual. The interpretation is according to the ideas held on the meaning of life, and this points to the value of studying philosophy. Assimilated by the various facets of the lower nature, these interpretations become avenues through which we are able to express as much of the higher nature as they permit.

The *Gita* enjoins us to "raise the self by the self." In one of his articles, "Daily Psychology," Mr. Judge suggests that raising the self by the self is not constricting, but, on the contrary, will enhance any man as a human being, and the means are readily available to all, whatever their condition in life. Mentioning intolerance as an example of the lower nature dominating, he shows that when even the most ordinary powers of the mind are used in the service of the higher man, these become the ways in which we learn to know ourselves and each other. Essential to this discovery is freeing the mind from the idea that its familiar habits are the only ones possible, so that other attitudes and modes of thinking can be entertained, and their merit discerned. Mr. Judge tells how this may be attempted:

> Our first step and the most difficult—for some, indeed, impossible—is to shock ourselves in such a manner that we may quickly be able to get out of, or rather understand, our own mental methods. I do not mean that we must abandon all our previous training and education, but that we shall so analyze all our mental operations as to know with certainty, to easily perceive, the actual difference in method between ourselves and any other person. This is a thing seldom undertaken or

accomplished by men nowadays. Each one is enamoured of his own mental habits, and disinclined to admit that any other one can be better. When we have become acquainted with this mental path of ours, we are then in position to see whether in any particular case our view is false.

This is the psychological and metaphysical equivalent of that scientific process which classifies and compares so as to arrive at distinguishing differences in things in order that physical laws may be discovered. For while we remain in ignorance of the method and path of our mind's action, there is no way in which we can compare with other minds. We can compare views and opinions, but not the actual mechanics of the thought. We can hear doctrines, but are unable to say whether we accept or reject from right reasoning or because our peculiar slant on the mental plane compels us to ratiocinate wholly in accordance with a mental obliquity acquired by many years of hurried life.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE GODS

It is requisite, however, to inquire why souls fall into bodies. And we may reply, with Proclus, Because they wish to imitate the providential energies of the Gods, and on this account proceed into generation, and leave the contemplation of true being: for, as Divine perfection is twofold, one kind being intellectual, and the other providential, and one kind consisting in an abiding energy, and the other in motion, hence souls imitate the prolific, intellectual, and immutable energy of the Gods by contemplation, but their providential and motive characteristic through a life conversant with generation. As the intelligence, too, of the human soul is partial, so likewise is her providence; but, being partial, it associates with a partial body. But still further, the descent of the soul contributes to the perfection of the universe. . . .

—THOMAS TAYLOR

on the lookout

Modern Awakening

Two contrasting themes are discernible in the "Introductory" section of *The Secret Doctrine*. One is the account given by H.P.B. of the efforts of the fanatical followers of organized Christianity, in the early days of its power, to erase and hide every evidence of the truth in ancient religion. Access to the Wisdom of the past, she says, "was blocked up, every record that hands could be laid upon, destroyed." (I, xli.) Accordingly, she invites the reader to give "all his attention to that millennium which divided the pre-Christian and the *post*-Christian periods," with Pythagoras at one end and the Neoplatonists at the other. This epoch, she says, was the last focus in history of "the bright rays of light streaming from the æons of time gone by." (*S.D.* I, xl, xlv.) The second theme H.P.B. emphasized was the modern revival of ancient mysteries, stirred by her own efforts—a revival, she suggested, which would begin to gain scholarly recognition in the twentieth century.

Excavations at Eleusis

Interestingly, a book first published in 1961 (and now in paperback)—*Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Princeton University Press), by George E. Mylonas, an author identified as among "the foremost archaeologists of our time"—presents evidence of a new spirit in scholarly approach to ancient philosophical religion. Prof. Mylonas was director of excavations at the site of Mycenae, and he played a major role in the final excavations at the religious center of Eleusis, some fourteen miles from Athens. Classicists may find many reasons to admire Prof. Mylonas's work, but the student of Theosophy will appreciate especially his profound respect for the part played by the Mysteries among the people of ancient Attica, and his strong confirmation of what H.P.B. says about the care with which ancient secrets were preserved. While most of his book is devoted to an account of the work of excavation, and to a comparison of the conclusions of

various scholars concerning the meaning of the structures disclosed, there are a number of passages like the following, which comes at the end of the volume:

> Whatever the substance and meaning of the Mysteries was, the fact remains that the cult of Eleusis satisfied the most sincere yearnings and the deepest longings of the human heart. The initiates returned from their pilgrimage to Eleusis full of joy and happiness, with the fear of death diminished and the strengthened hope of a better life in the world of shadows.

Gift of the Mysteries

After quoting from Sophocles and Pindar on the beneficent influence of the Mystery teaching, Prof. Mylonas says:

> When we read these and similar statements written by the great or nearly great of the ancient world, by the dramatists and thinkers, when we picture the magnificent buildings and monuments constructed at Eleusis by great political figures like Peisistratos, Kimon, Perikles, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius and others, we cannot help but believe that the Mysteries of Eleusis were not an empty, childish affair devised by shrewd priests to fool the peasant and the ignorant, but a philosophy of life that possessed substance and meaning and imparted a modicum of truth to the yearning human soul. That belief is strengthened when we read in Cicero that Athens has given nothing to the world more excellent or divine than the Eleusinian Mysteries.

The scholar reminds us that "the rites of Eleusis were held for some two thousand years," sustaining and ennobling humanity.

Secrets Untold

There were two sorts of rites at Eleusis—the public and the secret. While some scholars suppose they have found out the meaning of the secret rites, Prof. Mylonas does not believe they have been successful. Again and again he points out how faithfully the Greek hierophants guarded their secrets—an attitude reflected in the people of the time. We know, he says, "nothing of the substance of the Mysteries, of the meaning derived even from the sacred drama which was performed." (This was the story of the abduction of Persephone, daughter of Demeter, by Pluto, and of her restoration to earth life and reunion with her mother for six months of the year.) A passage on his own wonderings and search gives reason to respect the integrity and intuitions of this writer:

> . . . the last Hierophant carried with him to the grave the

> secrets which had been transmitted orally for untold generations, from one high priest to the next. A thick, impenetrable veil indeed still covers securely the rites of Demeter and protects them from the curious eyes of modern students. How many nights and days have been spent over books, inscriptions, and works of art by eminent scholars in their effort to lift the veil! How many wild and ingenious theories have been advanced by superhuman effort to explain the Mysteries! How many nights have I spent standing on the steps of the Telesterion, flooded with the magic silver light of a Mediterranean moon, hoping to catch the mood of the initiates, hoping that the human soul might get a glimpse of what the rational mind could not investigate! All in vain—the ancient world has kept its secret well and the Mysteries of Eleusis remain unrevealed.

Sustaining Doctrines

Neither scholarly speculations and reconstructions, nor the explanations of the early Christian Fathers—who could not, Prof. Mylonas says, be trusted—penetrate the meaning of the Mysteries. But the work of modern archaeologists has at least accomplished something. This scholar says in his introductory chapter:

> Legends and traditions portray the beginnings and the life story of the cult held at Eleusis and indicate its splendor and importance to mankind. The excavations conducted in our days not only brought to light the remains of the Sanctuary within which the cult was celebrated, but seem to prove that the cult was a most popular one and blessed humanity for generations. Legends and archaeology agree that at Eleusis for centuries the human mind and soul were sustained by a doctrine and belief of which the details and the meaning were lost when the lips of the last Hierophant were sealed by death sometime in the fifth century of our era. We cannot know the meaning of the cult today, but we can learn a great many things about it and about the behavior of men over centuries from the ruins that have survived.

Students wishing to recall statements by H.P.B. concerning the Mysteries will find guidance in the Supplementary Index to *The Secret Doctrine*, and there is her suggestion (II, 798) that when the "rubbish of the ages" has been cleared away, further information concerning the Mysteries, including the story of their downfall, will be provided (I, xl). Prof. Mylonas seems to be one of those active in removing rubbish which has concealed from view the true part played by the Mysteries in the lives of the ancient Greeks.

Alcohol "a Drug"

From the Spring 1975 *Menninger Quarterly*:

> Alcoholism is one of the nation's leading health problems. The often-quoted figure of nine million alcoholics in the U.S. is misleading—those are detected alcoholics, the obvious casualties of the illness. When one includes undetected alcoholics, the estimate shoots to an unbelievable 36 million.

The writer, Mimi Ferlemann, says this about the voluntary program for alcoholics at the Menninger Clinic:

> The program's education process covers many issues but the most basic and most important fact hammered home again and again, is that alcohol is a *drug*. Dr. George Penn, staff psychiatrist and member of the alcohol treatment staff, says that few are aware that ethyl alcohol is a sedative, hypnotic drug—an addictive chemical. Basically it is pharmacologically similar, in its reaction on the brain, to barbiturates such as Seconal and Tuinal and nonbarbiturate sedative hypnotics such as Doriden and Chloral Hydrate. . . . The addiction process begins with the *first* drink or the *first* pill.

"To Live or Not"

A "graduate" of the Menninger treatment for alcoholism was asked if he thought it had been effective in his case:

> "That's really a hard question to answer," he said, "because what's true today may not be true tomorrow. The fact that there's a two-year follow-up recognizes this. Treatment can't be completed in six or eight weeks but an important new beginning can be made.
>
> "You know," he added, "you come here thinking you're going to learn not to drink but that's not what you learn. In the majority of cases, I think it's first necessary to discover whether or not you want to live, then *why* you want to live and, finally, *how* you want to live.
>
> "I think you find snatches of approaches to this in the program. Most people involved in alcoholism treatment are beginning to realize that this is what's needed. It doesn't help to teach someone that drinking will kill him if he doesn't care whether or not he lives. The destructive tendency is one of the most easily recognized traits in the alcoholic. The alcoholic doesn't always know *when* the alcohol will kill him or *how* it will kill him but, by the time he's a first class alcoholic, he knows it's *going* to kill him. He has to be brought up short long enough to decide whether he wants to live or not."

It may be recalled that in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 262), H.P.B. associates the use of alcohol with narcotics, remarking that

"Wine and spirit drinking is only less destructive to the development of the inner powers than the habitual use of hashish, opium, and similar drugs." Alcohol, she said, "has a direct, marked, and very deleterious influence on man's psychic condition."

Ancient Science in New England

In a contribution to *Yankee* for September, 1975, Andrew E. Rothovius reports on the large stone monuments left by a supposedly "megalithic" people who had astronomical knowledge and "must have possessed observational, surveying and measuring skills of the highest order." The report focuses on monoliths and stone structures found at a site called "Mystery Hill" in North Salem, New Hampshire. Similar monuments have been discovered in other parts of New England and in New York. They are said to have "a strong resemblance to the megalithic 'big stone' constructions of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages in the British Isles and Western Europe, where they are variously called dolmens and cromlechs." Much of the investigation at Mystery Hill has been carried on by an amateur group, the New England Antiquities Research Association, which has been studying the monoliths and "stone village" there for some fifteen years. Interest has been renewed in these remains in consequence of the discovery that a variation in solar radiation before 1000 B.C. requires the dates arrived at by the radiocarbon method to be pushed much farther back into the past. "The recalibrated date for the original 1525 B.C. reading from the Mystery Hill charcoal found in 1971 is now 2000 B.C., all of 4000 years ago—contemporary with the earliest stages of Stonehenge."

Astronomical Alignments

The *Yankee* writer provides this description of the site:

> Mystery Hill contains numerous astronomical alignments similar to those in many of the British and French megalithic sites. From a point just to the north of the grooved stone platform popularly known as the Sacrifice Stone, but whose real function has yet to be satisfactorily determined, several lines can be drawn outward to stones that indicate the key points on the horizon of the astronomical year. To the southwest, the sun sets behind a triangular monolith on the year's shortest day, December 21; to the west and east are other stones marking the sunrise and sunset points on the dates of the spring and fall equinoxes, March 21 and September 22; to the northwest, another triangular monolith marks the setting point

of the sun on the year's longest day, June 21; due north is a monolith situated directly in line with the celestial North Pole (now located in the heavens by the current Pole Star, Polaris, but in 2000 B.C. by the star Thuban in the constellation Draco); while to the northeast is a fallen monolith which appears to indicate the point of the longest day's sunrise, on June 21.

Found in Every Country

The question engrossing the investigators of these remains is—What ancient and "primitive" people erected the monuments as an enduring testament to their knowledge? According to the *Yankee* writer, an "unknown" group of American Indians is thought by some to have developed the technique of building in stone, starting about six thousand years ago. The speculation is that they brought their skills to Europe, sailing the Atlantic in skin boats, where they established similar monuments revealing astronomical knowledge. These people, it is said, were essentially unwarlike and cremated their dead, placing the ashes in stone structures.

Speaking of megalithic or cyclopean remains in *The Secret Doctrine,* H. P. Blavatsky says, "There is no country from which they were absent," and asks, "Who built them?" In the monuments thought to be "tombs," no large skeletons have been found, but, H.P.B. remarks, "Cremation was universal till a comparatively recent period—some 80,000 or 100,000 years ago." Many of the monoliths are of greater size than those found in New England, and these, especially, remain a mystery:

> The modern archaeologist . . . knows, in fact, nothing of them or their origin. Yet, these weird, and often colossal monuments of unhewn stones—which consist generally of four or seven gigantic blocks placed together—are strewn over Asia, Europe, America, and Africa, in groups or rows. Stones of enormous size are found placed horizontally and variously upon two, three, four, and as in Poitou, upon six and seven blocks. . . . The stones of Carnac in the Morbihan, Brittany—nearly a mile in length and numbering 11,000 ranged in eleven rows—are twin sisters of those at Stonehenge. . . . Such dolmens and prehistoric monuments are met with in almost every latitude. (*S.D.* II, 752.)

"Zodiacs in Stone"

Amplifying, H.P.B. lists the sites as found in the Mediterranean basin, Denmark, Shetland, Sweden, Germany, Spain, Africa, Pales-

tine, Algeria, Sardinia, India, Russia, Siberia, and Peru and Bolivia. The antiquity of the monuments seems almost certainly greater than that allowed by the revised figures of the carbon dating process. Some hint of how old they may be is suggested by the following from *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 750):

> . . . there are records which show Egyptian priests—Initiates—journeying in a North-Westerly direction, *by land, via* what became later the Straits of Gibraltar; turning North and travelling through the future Phoenician settlements of Southern Gaul; then still further North, until reaching Carnac (Morbihan) they turned to the West again and arrived, *still travelling by land,* on the North-Western promontory of the New Continent [what are now the British Islands, which were not yet detached from the main continent in those days].
>
> What was the object of their long journey? And how far back must we place the date of such visits? The archaic records show the Initiates of the Second Sub-race of the Aryan family moving from one land to the other for the purpose of supervising the building of *menhirs* and dolmens of colossal Zodiacs in stone, and places of sepulchre to serve as receptables for the ashes of generations to come. When was it? The fact of their crossing from France to Great Britain *by land* may give an idea of the date when such a journey could have been performed on *terra firma.*

Mayan Tower

Discoveries elsewhere in the Western hemisphere are persuading scholars that astronomical knowledge was widespread in the ancient world, beyond the areas of influence of Greek, Egyptian, Babylonian and Chinese civilizations. An article in the *Los Angeles Times* for June 12, 1975, summarizes the work of several astronomers in relation to sites in Mexico and the United States. Most extensive have been the findings at what is known as the Caracol tower among the Mayan ruins at Chichen Itza in Yucatan. Three investigators, Anthony Aveni, an astronomer, Sharon Gibbs, a historian of science, and Horst Hartung, an architect, have shown that the tower was almost certainly used for astronomical observations. From different windows of the tower they found a number of alignments coinciding with Venus, and some with the stars Canopus, Castor and Pollux. A guide used in this study was the Dresden Codex, a Mayan parchment dated in the thirteenth century, but believed to have been copied from a ninth-century original. The Dresden Codex, Dr. Aveni says, was written

about the time the Caracol tower was being built, starting about 850 A.D.

Sightings of Venus

The Mayans gave much attention to the planet Venus, since they believed it to have "different effects on different classes of people," according to Henry B. Nicholson, a University of California (Los Angeles) anthropologist. Five pages of the Codex deal with sightings of Venus, Dr. Aveni says. They tell "whether the planet would be seen as a morning or an evening star and the limits of its northern and southern risings and settings on the horizon." The *Times* summary continues:

> But the tower was not restricted to observations of Venus, according to Aveni. It is also possible, by aligning other features on the structure, to anticipate the day when the sun's zenith passed directly across Chichen Itza. That day, he said, marked the Mayan New Year.

John A. Eddy, an astronomer who works with the National Center for Atmospheric Research at Boulder, Colo., has reported on the scientific significance of the "medicine wheel" in the Big Horn Mountains of northern Wyoming. The *Times* account relates:

> The wheel, one of about 30 similar forms found so far on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, is an irregular circle, some 25 meters (80 feet) in diameter, outlined by stones. At the center is a cairn (a stone pile). Six smaller cairns are located around the edge of the wheel and some 28 spokes radiate out from the central cairn to the rim of the wheel. . . . Eddy concluded that the wheel had been used by Plains Indians (Sioux, Arapahoe, Cheyenne or Shoshone, but most likely Crow) to mark the time of the summer solstice. . . .

Astronomy Rooted in Astrology

> Still other researchers are expected to revisit such sites as Cahokia, in Illinois, where a circular pattern of wooden post holes was found some time ago; or at Callanis and Castle Rigg in the British Isles, where large stone slabs were erected by people perhaps several thousand years ago; or at Carnac, in France.

Dr. George Abell, of UCLA's astronomy department, told the *Times* that modern historians of astronomy are finding the roots of astronomy in astrology. The director of the Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles, Dr. Edwin Krupp, spoke of the natural link between astronomy and the development of social structures. He is writing a book on archeo-astronomy.